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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this book is to show the relationship between the counselor and the teaching of reading, and to show how the reading teacher and reading specialist may help prevent or solve guidance problems. The book is composed of five sections. Section 1, "Related Principles, Functions and Techniques," discusses educational guidance, personal-social adjustment, vocational guidance, cumulative personnel records, interviews, and conferences. "Guidance in Developmental Reading," section 2, deals with guidance in beginning reading, continued guidance in the primary grades, reading development in the intermediate grades, guidance in the junior high school, and high school and college reading. Section 3, addresses educational and vocational guidance problems, dropouts, delinquency and discipline problems, and emotional problems and reading difficulties. Section 4, "Guidance in the Reading Development of Exceptional Children," deals with the mentally retarded, able learners, severe reading disability cases, and the physically handicapped. The last section, "The Team Approach," looks at the contribution of the counselor, the contribution of the reading specialist, and the preparation which they need. (WR)

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Guidance and the Teaching of Reading

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FOREWORD

NO ONE in the world is better able to author this publication than Ruth Strang. She has spent a lifetime in the fields of reading and guidance and her prolific writings in both areas have already demonstrated her point of view now focused upon, in a specific and practical way, in this publication.

In a number of other publications, when guidance and reading are coupled, the emphasis is usually placed on the problem reader. Dr. Strang has placed such emphasis in this publication but has also stressed the major concept of a team approach for all learners. As indicated in her preface and as demonstrated throughout the pamphlet, prevention of learning problems is vital and can probably best be brought about through the planned, interrelated activities of guidance counselors and reading specialists.

The author's message in this Reading Aid is obviously the result of years of experience, sound judgment, and a broad, logical conceptual background. The volume will not only help guidance counselors and reading specialists develop or further develop broad insights and frameworks for interrelated activities but will also provide them with specific, functional procedures. Dr. Strang, once again, provides us with a publication of major significance.

H. ALAN ROBINSON
PRESIDENT, 1967-1968
International Reading Association

The International Reading Association attempts through its publications to provide a forum for a wide spectrum of opinion on reading. This policy permits divergent view points without assuming the endorsement of the Association.

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PREFACE

IT IS astonishing that two fields so closely interwoven in actual practice as are guidance and reading should be so completely separated in the literature. There are hundreds of books and articles on guidance that never mention the teaching of reading, and an equal number of publications on reading that make little or no reference to guidance.

The aim of this book is to show how the counselor may contribute to the improvement of reading, and how the reading teacher and specialist may help prevent and sometimes alleviate or solve guidance problems.

To avoid the clumsy term *guidance worker,* the word *counselor* is used throughout to designate the broadly-trained and functioning guidance or personnel worker. *Reading specialist* includes the reading teacher, reading consultant, and reading clinician unless otherwise stated.

Prevention is emphasized. If the counselor understands the development of reading ability, he will see opportunities for facilitating it. If the reading teacher recognizes the influence of reading failure on an individual's personality and social development, he will endeavor to prevent difficulties by offering a more effective reading curriculum.

The need for remediation is also recognized. Reading and guidance problems may be treated by either counselors or reading specialists who have had preparation in both fields. The team approach and the case conference, involving teachers as well as available specialists, comprise a learning experience for all participants as well as an effective method of understanding and helping the child being studied.

Starting with the broad view of guidance, this book aims to show concretely how counselors, reading teachers, and specialists can teach as they guide and guide while they teach.

R.S.

Chapter 1

RELATED PRINCIPLES, FUNCTIONS AND TECHNIQUES

GUIDANCE is interwoven with the teaching of reading. Both should permeate whole school systems. The counselor is concerned with total behavioral modification; the reading teacher and specialist focuses attention on improvement of reading and related language arts as an aspect of individual development. Their respective functions involve aspects of both guidance and reading. They use many techniques in common. Their cumulative records include similar items. Guidance problems may impair reading proficiency, and reading difficulties often precipitate guidance problems.

Dwight L. Burton (*5*) thus describes the relation between reading and the central goal of guidance, which is self-discovery and self-actualization:

> Reading gives vision; the quest for identity. The answer to the question, "Who am I?" demands that the individual occasionally compare himself with others who were able to call up their reserves of courage and resourcefulness.

• Underlying Principles and Points of View

Essential aspects of theory are included in the following brief description of guidance: Guidance is a process of helping every individual, through his own efforts, to discover and develop his potentialities for his personal fulfillment and social usefulness.

> According to this definition, the guidance worker is primarily concerned with promoting development rather than with resolving immediate difficulties. He is concerned with every individual. He creates an environment in which the individual takes initiative and responsibility for the discovery and development of his unique potentialities (*37*).

By slightly paraphrasing this description of the guidance process we have an equally comprehensive definition of the teaching of reading as a process

of helping every individual, through his own efforts, to discover and develop his reading potentialities for his self-fulfillment and social usefulness.

These descriptions are in accord with modern principles of psychology:

The process of discovery and reinventing by which one acquires knowledge and skills is more important than the end results.

Our concern is with the best development of every individual, not just with the deviates and problem cases.

As the child grows up he must increasingly take responsibility for his own guidance and learning.

Self-discovery and identification are prerequisite to the development of one's potentialities.

Self-actualization is not selfish; it makes possible the individual's greatest contribution to others.

The guidance point of view should permeate the teaching of reading. Like the counselor, the reading teacher tries to make a good match between the learning task and the individual's present potential. He applies learning and guidance theory and techniques to insure successful performance and retention of reading skills. This is guidance in learning.

Similarly, the teacher of reading contributes to effective guidance. Many writers have listed guidance functions. Mathewson's list (*23*) steers a middle course between the too-narrow view almost synonymous with vocational guidance and the too-broad view hardly distinguishable from education in general. His analysis includes five major services of guidance:

Orientation to appropriate educational experiences.
Educational progress and adjustment to educational experiences.
Personal-social adjustment, orientation, and development.
Occupational orientation and early adjustment.
Avocational orientation.

It is interesting to see how these services involve reading proficiency to a greater or lesser extent.

Educational Guidance

Educational guidance, the function most frequently performed by counselors on all educational levels, certainly involves reading proficiency. This function includes educational orientation, educational progress, and adjustment. The selection of appropriate courses requires a knowledge of the student's reading ability. Failure in English and social studies, which require extensive reading, is often due to lack of reading ability. Whether

this failure stems from a special verbal disability, a lack of general intelligence, poor instruction in reading, or a combination of factors is a question the counselor tries to answer in helping the student plan his total educational program, including advanced training. Lack of reading ability is a predictor of academic failure.

Colleges and other higher institutions vary tremendously in their demands for efficient study and reading habits. A student who makes an A average in high school may get As in a college with low academic standards, Bs in another college, and Cs in one of the top-ranking colleges such as Haverford or Barnard, where the average IQ at one time was 155. If the student made a good match between his ability and the college requirements, he might complete the four years successfully instead of flunking out in the freshman year.

After a student has selected a course, he needs guidance in making satisfactory progress. The counselor helps him to evaluate his progress, use his strengths and strengthen the weak links in the chain of abilities leading to reading proficiency. In individual or group counseling sessions the student may see more clearly the relation of his studies and school activities to his personal needs, purposes, plans, and potentialities. Teachers should conduct similar discussions with reference to the specific values of their subjects.

The counselor and psychologist often assist the reading specialist in diagnosing severe reading problems and providing appropriate remedial work. Or they may recommend transfer to a more suitable academic program.

Personal-Social Adjustment

Practically every aspect of personal-social adjustment is related to success or failure in reading. A counselor often discovers that reading disability is at the bottom of the behavior problem for which a student is referred. This sequence is common: lack of adequate reading proficiency leading to frustration and failure in academic subjects. This, in turn, may result in aggressive behavior directed toward property, toward others, or inward against oneself. Continued failure accompanied by obvious or subtle disapproval of teachers, classmates, and parents may result in apathy or a self-concept extremely difficult to modify.

Students' relations to teachers and to other pupils have been shown to be associated with reading achievement. These relations may stimulate positively or may prevent an individual from realizing his reading potentialities. Students will work hard for teachers whom they like; they may, consciously or unconsciously, resist learning from teachers toward whom they feel antagonistic.

The relation of the self-concept and attitudes of self-confidence and self-reliance to reading achievement has been shown in several research studies. Even the expectation of success has a stimulating effect on learning. In an ingenious experiment by Rosenthal and Jacobson (*3*) teachers who were deceived into believing that certain of their students would show unusual progress stimulated these students in subtle, mostly nonverbal, ways to achieve beyond the average. The gains were most dramatic in the lowest grades. This study suggested that children tend to become the kind of students their teachers expect them to be.

Not only does the student's observation of his improvement build his self-confidence and decrease his frustrations, but the teacher's response to his comments and behavior may have therapeutic effect.

Research on the relative effectiveness of reading instruction or tutoring and psychotherapy in improving student reading has been somewhat inconclusive (*25*). Psychotherapy has been reported to be more effective than tutoring, and a combination of tutoring and psychotherapy better than either procedure alone. The results of such research undoubtedly vary with the quality of psychotherapy and tutoring employed. Tutoring focused entirely on reading skills and psychotherapy divorced from any reference to reading might be expected to be less effective than teaching that constantly encourages the student's hopeful attitudes, reduces excessive fear and anxiety, and reinforces every evidence of progress in reading proficiency.

Ideals and values are intangibles that may explain the 24 percent of the variance not accounted for in Holmes and Singer's (*16*) factor analysis involving measures of 54 factors related to reading speed and power. At one time the counselor was expected to be noncommittal; he tried not to let his own values and personality intrude in his counseling relationship. More recently Rogers (*31*), Allport (*1*), and others have emphasized the influence of these personal elements on the counselor's attitudes and sense of commitment. Motivation of this kind is as necessary for reading as for other kinds of achievement.

Vocational Guidance

Successful vocational orientation and personal aid in early occupational adjustments likewise hinge on the reading proficiency requisite for vocations within the individual's range of choice. Choosing, preparing for, and progressing in a vocation involve reading ability. Every vocation requires certain reading abilities, if nothing more than the ability to read directions and safety signs. As unskilled labor is supplanted by automation, the jobs that are available demand higher levels of reading ability. The counselor should know the reading requirements of different kinds of jobs.

Many young people cannot obtain jobs because they have not had the necessary training. Some of them cannot get the training because they are unable to read. For these young people, reading instruction in groups and individually must be provided. The slogan of these tutoring programs has been "Reading is the key."

Avocational orientation, while increasingly important, is often neglected. Avocations develop, as well as require, reading ability. Drama clubs call for reading ability in selecting the plays, interpreting them, and reading or learning the parts. One girl who was failing in all her subjects was selected for a leading role in a play. Her exceptional histrionic ability won her recognition from her peers and adults. Success in this area had a stimulating effect which spread to her academic subjects.

The counselor plans with the student a total program of educational and avocational experiences. In the case of one boy who was very superior in his academic subjects, the counselor advised dropping one subject so he would have more time for the social experiences that he lacked. By joining a chess club and the school paper staff, he obtained both the intellectual stimulation he wanted and the social experience he needed.

• Techniques

In carrying out their responsibilities both the counselor and reading teacher need to know as much as possible about the individual student. This includes information about his home environment, academic record, personality traits, out-of-school interests, attitudes and goals, health status, and other conditions. Many of these data should be found on the cumulative records.

Cumulative Personnel Records

Although collecting and recording personal data are primarily the responsibility of the counselor, the records are needed by classroom teachers, reading teachers and consultants, and school administrators. Hence there should be an interchange of information among these staff members about individual students.

Cumulative records give a basis for grouping students and planning instruction. They show trends in reading performance as well as present ability, trends and fluctuation in achievement in every subject, indications of mental ability, and a record of school attendance. A study of these data, supplemented by conferences among staff personnel, may indicate a need for placement of a student in a special reading group. Additional test results and case studies give all persons involved in working with students a better understanding of each individual.

In the diagnosis of reading difficulties the cumulative record may furnish information on different levels of diagnosis. The results of standardized tests supply information on a student's reading achievement, proficiency in other academic subjects, and intelligence as measured by various group tests. In some cases results of individual intelligence tests will be available. Anecdotal records written by teachers give glimpses of a student's school adjustment, and occasionally there may be facts furnished by the school psychologist or by a mental hygiene or reading clinic.

If these kinds of information are recorded, the reading teacher will not have to spend time in testing and collecting quantitative data when she might better be helping the student overcome his weaknesses and reinforce his strengths. For students eager to begin improving their reading immediately, adequate cumulative records are especially valuable; without them, students might be frustrated by several periods of testing that seem to contribute nothing to their progress in reading.

The quality of cumulative records varies greatly. Some are practically worthless, even misleading; others are incomplete, or may contain inaccuracies and biased statements. Others describe each student's abilities, interests, personalities, and achievement in much detail but stop short of the dynamic function of interpretation which might lead to recommendations and remediation. It is not enough to collect data; the significance of the facts should be weighed; they should be related and interpreted with reference to the student's special needs (*13*).

Some counselors prefer to form their own estimate of an individual before looking at his cumulative record. A counselor or reading teacher may avoid being unduly or adversely influenced if he remembers that 1) the record gives only a partial picture of the student, 2) the student is changing and growing, hence the information may be out of date or incomplete, and 3) the anecdotal records may present a teacher's philosophy or prejudice rather than an objective description of the individual.

The ideal cumulative record for child guidance would consist of three cards. One would contain quantitative and clinical information collected and interpreted by the specialist. Another would record the teacher's ratings on specific items of intelligence, personality, and attainments. These ratings would be supplemented by anecdotal records of observation and notes on interviews with children and parents. The teacher would also note facts about the child's home conditions and health. There would be space to write additional comments on any adaptations made in the student's work or play to meet his peculiar needs. The third card would record the interpretation and synthesis of all the information available.

The cumulative record is not an end in itself; it represents a waste of time if it is not kept up to date and is not used often by various school

personnel. Ideally it should describe various teaching methods used and results obtained, in order to form a basis for correcting mistakes in teaching the child and for revealing "new possibilities of development in children" (*13*). Adequate records, used conscientiously, enable teachers and counselors to select methods and materials most suitable for the individuals they seek to help.

Interviews

The interview is another pervasive technique used by guidance and reading specialists in performing many of their functions. If the counselor is aware of the relation of reading difficulties to other problems, he will catch clues of these difficulties in interviews with parents and students. If the reading teacher is aware of the influence of a student's personal problems on his success in reading, he will more easily recognize these possible blocks to reading efficiency.

The interview has been defined as "a conversation with a purpose." Certainly it is not merely desultory chitchat. One might ask, "Whose purpose?" For both the counselor and the counselee the interview should be purposeful.

The effective interviewer is person-centered rather than problem- or technique-centered. He also recognizes the limitations of counseling, and often changes the environment rather than trying to change the person.

On the basis of information available, the counselor can plan to explore certain areas with the student, but the student should also take initiative and responsibility for exploring his own problem and for making the best use of the interview session. As Jessie Taft (*39*) has pointed out, the experiences, the use of time, and the relationships in the interview period are an important part of therapy. For example, with a boy whose reading problem was related to overdependence on parents, the worker used every opportunity during the interview to develop his initiative. When the boy did not succeed in his first attempt to open the window, the reading teacher encouraged him to try again instead of opening it for him. She gave him many opportunities to choose his activities and reading materials, and to plan a program he thought would be helpful. She gave him printed directions for getting to the Reading Center so he would not always have to be accompanied by his father.

The following are some errors in interviewing:

Failure to convey a warmth of relationship.

A tendency to seize upon and push a solution without giving the student a chance to explore the situation thoroughly.

Persistence in a preferred technique when it is clearly inappropriate.

Failure to follow up on clues.

A tendency to evoke confidences that the counselor can not handle and which the student will regret having disclosed. "What doth it profit a counselor though he gain information if he antagonizes the individual he had hoped to help?"

At the end of an interview both counselor and student should have a feeling of accomplishment—not necessarily of a problem solved, but of progress made in the development of personal qualities of initiative and responsibility for learning, a sense of commitment, and an acceptance of changing conditions. If such qualities are developed, the effect on the individual's ultimate achievement will be greater than if the time had been spent solely in solving specific problems or in acquiring certain reading skills. This is not to minimize the importance of skills, or to deny that habits of work and attitudes are built in the process of acquiring the skills.

If a feeling of accomplishment is the primary purpose of the interview, the psychology of behavioral modification and operant conditioning is appropriate. When a student thoughtfully attempts to analyze his problem or task or to describe his reading process, the interviewer should express keen, spontaneous interest and approval, e.g., "That's a very interesting explanation;" "You made a real keen analysis of that problem;" "Not many have described their reading process as clearly as you have;" "You've made an excellent beginning. Can you tell more?"

Similarly, the student's positive insights can be reinforced. When a ten-year-old arrived at the conclusion that his being an adopted child didn't matter, the interviewer said positively, "You're right. It doesn't really matter. Your foster mother loves you very much."

The secret of successful interviewing is flexibility and sensitivity to what the other person is thinking and feeling. Interviewing is a process of continuous adaptation to the person's needs at the moment and his long range goals. Many suggestions for facilitating this process are given elsewhere (*36, 41*).

Conferences

While working together each specialist learns from the others, from classroom teachers, and from students. Especially effective is the conference in which a case is presented by the person who knows the student best. Others, who have had contact with the student, pool their information and help in the interpretation and synthesis of the data and in formulating hypotheses and recommendations. Everyone learns from the experience.

• Concluding Statement

Underlying the work of both counselor and reading specialist are environmental influences. As far back as 1925 Thurstone (*40*) defined personnel research as "the study of the conditions under which productive work may be made a truly integral part of living." We have often lost sight of the importance of creating home, school, and neighborhood conditions favorable to child and adolescent development.

In many cases reading problems have arisen because of poor teaching. The child has not been given the systematic instruction and practice needed to develop reading abilities. In such cases, the reading teacher begins instruction a little below the child's present performance and proceeds step by step to provide the instruction that was previously neglected. If the child still fails to make progress, a diagnostic test could be used to detect specific underlying deficits that should be built up.

Reading problems may be created by a curriculum that does not relate to the student's interests, needs, and purposes and by methods of instruction that do not provide for individual differences. Lack of interest and effort often may be due to dull, poorly written books. Poor medical service may permit physical impairments to go uncorrected.

In many ways both the counselor and reading specialist, through their policy-making function and community contacts, may help to prevent reading problems at their source. The broadly-trained counselor is alert to reading difficulties associated with guidance problems. The reading teacher and specialist constantly apply guidance principles and procedures in teaching reading and in working with reading cases.

Chapter 2

GUIDANCE IN DEVELOPMENTAL READING

BOTH READING and guidance personnel should be concerned with and understand the sequential development of reading abilities, the causes and correlates of reading difficulties, and effective methods of teaching reading. They are thus able to create conditions that help prevent serious reading problems from arising. Because many counselors have little information about the reading curriculum, the developmental aspects of the teaching of reading will be described here in some detail.

• If only . . . The Preschool Years

The guidance of preschool children and the development of their prerequisites for success in reading are of crucial importance. "Well begun is more than half done," as research in child development has clearly shown. So important is this early start that James Plant, for many years director of the New Jersey Child Guidance Clinic, once said that guidance in the future would be largely parent guidance.

Counselors and reading teachers often say, "If only certain things had been done during preschool years . . . !" If only an adequate diet had been provided; if only neurological damage from birth trauma and infection had been prevented; if only defects of vision and hearing had been corrected early; if only parents and nursery school teachers of preschool children had provided a more intellectually stimulating environment and more opportunities for language development; and if only the child had become more outgoing and self-confident—then many guidance and reading problems in elementary and secondary school might have been prevented.

If parents and educators knew more definitely the preschool conditions that lead to optimum development, they could try to create favorable conditions more often. What, specifically, can counselors and reading teachers and specialists do to remove some of these "if only's?"

In their positions in elementary and secondary schools they have some contacts with parents of preschool children. At parents' meetings, although primarily concerned with school-age children, they can give some

encouragement and concrete suggestions to mothers who also have preschool children.

In their parent conferences, counselors and reading specialists can spend a few minutes inquiring about the preschool children in the family and reinforcing the sound features of the parents' present treatment of them. In addition, they may describe concretely one or two things that the parent can do.

From time to time counselors and reading consultants can prepare newsletters or leaflets for parents and regular classroom teachers. These might well mention and illustrate the ideas that would correct some of the "if only's."

Very important are the opportunities to interest upper elementary and secondary school pupils in the development of their younger brothers and sisters and other young children for whom the older girls (and sometimes boys) are employed as baby sitters. They may acquire the necessary understanding in health education, home economics, and other classes or in a special club. The older pupils may be given instruction in 1) selecting stories that would interest small children, 2) learning to read so effectively that they would hold the children's attention, and 3) listening and responding to the children's comments. This education in child care practices is not only of value to older pupils in the present, but also later in life when they may become parents.

In classes of retarded readers, too, pupils who have preschool brothers and sisters can become interested in reading to them. The reading teacher may use class time to give them instruction and practice in doing this. Reading to younger children not only benefits the preschoolers, but also helps the retarded readers to develop fluency and vocabulary by reading easy material without feeling embarrassed by carrying around "baby" books. The sense of being of service to their own and to other groups of preschool children also increases their self-esteem and sense of worth.

If guidance and reading specialists have the opportunity for contact with nursery school and kindergarten teachers, they may discuss with them ways in which children's experiences in these pre- first grade groups may contribute to success in the language arts.

Even the best teachers tend to pay attention to undesirable behavior and ignore the positive aspects. They should do the opposite. Experiments have shown that behavior which is reinforced with a reward valued by the child tends to be repeated; behavior that is ignored by the adult tends to be ignored by the child. The alert teacher is constantly reinforcing accurate perception and memory, and success in distinguishing forms and shapes and sounds. When a child shows a spontaneous interest in recognizing letters and words, he should be encouraged to explore reading material

in his own way. When he picks up a letter and looks at it inquiringly, the adult may name it, as Moore (2[illegible]d in his electric typewriter experiment. When the child asks to see a word or phrase or sentence that has been read aloud to him, the reader may show it to him.

• Guidance in Beginning Reading

In elementary school the counselor has many responsibilities directly or indirectly related to the teaching of reading. Teachers turn to whatever specialist is available for suggestions for teaching reading. When a psychologist employed to serve a rural county asked the teachers to tell her in what ways she could be most helpful to them, three-fourths of the requests related to the teaching of reading.

If no reading specialist is available, the counselor or psychologist in elementary schools should be familiar with the psychology of reading, the reading curriculum, modern methods of teaching, and special reading problems of exceptional children. As the specialist works with cases referred to him by teachers, he shares with the teacher his diagnostic methods and findings, and describes the remedial procedures he has been using or would recommend. Even if he has not had specific training in the teaching of reading, he may serve as a catalyst, stimulating teachers to learn and practice more effective methods of teaching reading.

In workshops initiated by the teachers and attended on a voluntary basis, each specialist may contribute his particular knowledge. Primary teachers are usually concerned about children who do not begin to read as soon or as easily as the average. What they want to know is why and what they can do about it within the limitations of the classroom.

The counselor may play a part in determining when children should enter the first grade. If children have not had the prereading experiences common to children in good homes, instead of advocating delayed school entrance as some administrators have done, the counselor may advise that they enter school at an earlier age. This extra time should be used to provide the experiences that have been lacking in their homes. They become acquainted with interesting things to talk about; they play singing action games and develop motor coordination. To develop visual and auditory perception and discrimination, they look and listen and respond to objects, pictures, geometric forms, letters, and sounds.

The children take the initiative in selecting activities. Their learning is reinforced by the teacher's smile and specific approval. They talk with and through puppets along with their other activities. It is during the preschool years that a language is most quickly and easily learned. By acquiring these prerequisite abilities, educationally disadvantaged children become ready

to begin instruction in reading with the other children entering first grade at the same age.

The counselor or psychologist, if there is no reading consultant in the elementary school, helps teachers to ascertain children's readiness for reading. A reading readiness test such as the Metropolitan Readiness Test, the Harrison-Stroud, or others can be given to the class as a whole. These tests are fairly reliable in identifying groups of children who are likely to have difficulty in learning to read. The tests also suggest specific areas of difficulty of individual children. By recognizing and using the abilities in which a child is initially strong, the child gains self-confidence. By overcoming his weaknesses in eye-hand coordination, visual and auditory perception, discrimination, memory, and sequencing, he no longer finds the task of decoding the printed symbols into spoken words insurmountable.

With the reading consultant's guidance, one first grade teacher found that seventeen of her thirty children were rated below average or "poor risks" on the Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test. Every day while the rest of the class were working independently, the teacher gave this group special eye and ear training using the Peabody training material (*28*). She encouraged conversation with their favorite puppet, BooBoo, and provided practice to develop the abilities in which individual children were weak. By November when the test was repeated, all but four children rated average or above. They then moved into more systematic instruction in reading.

Further diagnosis of perceptual-motor and psycholinguistic abilities is needed with children who do not respond to the usual remedial readiness methods. The Wepman Test of Auditory Discrimination (*43*), the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities (*19*), and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (*42*) will identify abilities underlying success in learning to read. There are games and exercises to build up each of the deficits discovered.

When a child's reading difficulty apparently is not due to the factors already mentioned, an emotional disturbance may be the cause. This is more specifically the province of the counselor and psychotherapist.

Emotional problems arising in the home may prevent a child from concentrating on the reading task. For example, one little boy who was not responding to reading instruction said to the teacher one day, "I can't put my mind on the reading 'cause I keep thinking of what my mother and little sister are doing at home." His extreme jealousy of his sister prevented him from concentrating on the task of learning to read.

In this case the counselor, who was skilled in play therapy, encouraged the child to play out and talk out his family relations with doll figures. Whenever he showed insight or a positive attitude, the counselor was quick to reinforce it by repeating and approving it. To the mother the counselor

suggested giving the little boy at least ten minutes a day that were exclusively his, ten minutes in which she gave him her full attention while listening to his remarks, reading aloud, or playing games with him. When the child's emotional conflicts had been solved, he could give his attention to the reading instruction.

Poor instruction too often accounts for a beginner's difficulty in learning to read. The learning tasks that the teacher expects him to do may be so easy that they present no challenge. More often the task is too difficult; beginners have not acquired the abilities leading up to it. For example, the teacher may expect them to relate the sound and form of letters before they have learned to clearly distinguish the sounds and letter forms.

Antagonism toward the teacher may also interfere with children's learning. Many children come to school afraid of the teacher. If this fear is not overcome or if it is intensified, it interferes with learning. One fourteen-year-old boy, in trying to state the reasons for his reading disability, said, "When I was in the first grade the teacher didn't like me." In working with teachers the counselor can often tactfully interpret a child's feelings to the teacher.

When none of the conditions described explain a child's extreme difficulty in learning to read, some brain injury or neurological dysfunction may be suspected. Unless there is obvious brain damage detected by a neuropsychological examination, the reading difficulty should not be attributed to "minimal brain damage." Such a label tends to disturb parents and children, and should be avoided.

The counselor cannot be expected to show a first grade teacher how to teach reading. He may, however, encourage the teacher to analyze the situation, to observe children's responses to instruction and modify it as indicated. By working closely with a teacher on a behavior problem referred to him, the counselor as well as the teacher may gain understanding of reading in its setting of child development. The intensive study of one child may increase a teacher's understanding of many other children.

• Continued Guidance in the Primary Grades

Having helped a child to get off to a good start in learning to read, the teacher does all he can to continue the good work. He interweaves instruction and practice in each of the basic skills. He gives as much repetition of word recognition, vocabulary, and sentence reading as a given child needs, but he does not bore the able learners with drill they do not need. He encourages all the children to read books on their present level. Some need to read many preprimers and beginners books; others can read with enjoyment supplementary books on fourth and fifth grade level.

The counselor and reading specialist serve as consultants and resource persons, very much as in the stage of beginning reading. They discuss behavioral objectives, task analyses, and methods of facilitating children's learning. The reading specialist contributes an understanding of the reading process. He recognizes that growth toward mature reading requires a basic sight vocabulary, word recognition skills, and ability to comprehend the flow of thought in sentences. The specific objectives are determined by observation of the child and understanding of his motives and interests. This is the reading curriculum which the child himself determines. The specialist assists the teacher in measuring progress and in supplying opportunities for development at the psychological moment.

The counselor may take responsibility for appraisal by means of standardized tests. For example, he may use or show teachers how to use the Dolch Test of Basic Vocabulary (*7*) to obtain evidence of children's ability to pronounce the Dolch words at sight. He may administer the test to an entire class, or use the Dolch cards with individual children. To test the quickness of their perception of these words, he may expose them for one-hundredth of a second in a tachistoscope. To obtain some indication of the children's capacity to learn these words, he may teach them a number of words and later see if they have remembered them. They can be given extra practice in recognizing words with which they have difficulty.

Testing and teaching the meaning of the Dolch words are difficult because many in the list are structural words which can be comprehended only in context. The practice material should present those words in sentences. They will eventually be more fully learned when the child becomes familiar with their meanings through wide reading.

The guidance worker may use both group and individual tests of word recognition skills. The McCullough Word Analysis Tests (*21*) and the Developmental Reading Tests by Bond, Clymer, and Hoyt (*4*) give useful diagnostic information on basic reading abilities.

At the end of the third grade, achievement in vocabulary and paragraph reading is usually measured by a standardized reading test. The latest edition of the Stanford Achievement Test was recommended by the Educational Records Bureau (*8*) as

> unquestionably a superior test . . . to appraise the performance of pupils on the questions which comprise the test—and to use such appraisal as additional information to that obtained by teachers through their own tests and evaluations . . . The trend toward using partial batteries of the Stanford Achievement Test seems to be changing in favor of using the whole battery.

The Stanford Achievement series has the advantage, when making develop-

mental studies, of comparable forms and of similarity in form from grades one to eight, inclusive.

The counselor would give other tests if there were a need for them. But his emphasis would be on the teacher's day-by-day observation of individual pupil responses to instruction and on teacher-made tests of the reading abilities that pupils in different groups should develop. He would encourage teachers to use the understanding of reading performance and its correlates in their teaching and to gain further understanding of the pupils while teaching. This is diagnostic teaching. The role of the specialist is to encourage this kind of dynamic teaching that evolves as the teacher listens to and learns from the pupils.

As a participant in policy making, the guidance worker or counselor might well stress the value of the ungraded primary unit. If properly administered, an ungraded unit would necessitate individualization of education. In this form of organization each pupil progresses at his own rate toward his own immediate objectives. There is no formal promotion at the end of the semester or year. If at the end of the third grade a pupil is unable to read fourth grade material, he is placed in a special fourth grade that offers extra instruction in reading. At the same time he learns at least the minimum content of fourth grade subjects. If he has sufficiently improved his reading, he will be promoted to the fifth grade. If he has not, he may be retained in the fourth grade for another year.

• Reading Development in the Intermediate Grades

Many pupils have difficulty in reading when they enter the fourth grade. This may be due in part to the new vocabulary. As analyses of textbooks in science, social studies, and mathematics have shown, the vocabulary load in these subjects becomes heavy. Also, the content and style of these texts differ from those of the stories they have read previously. Each subject presents special reading problems of vocabulary, content, and style. The teacher recognizes these difficulties and gives reading instruction as necessary in connection with his teaching of each subject.

Students may also have difficulties because they have not learned to apply the reading skills they were taught in the primary grades. Some teachers assume that fourth grade children have acquired reading ability and need no further instruction in reading. They give assignments which require location-of-information skills that the pupils have not been taught. Most pupils need instruction in how to locate references on a topic or problem, extract relevant information, take useful notes, organize and relate the ideas, write a report or give it orally. Pupils may also be expected to read critically and interpret character and motive when they have done this only incidentally in the lower grades.

From their interviews with individual pupils, counselors and reading teachers may have become more aware of children's specific difficulties than the classroom teacher. If so, the specialist may describe some of these difficulties and indicate their frequency. Teachers appreciate learning about any new, effective methods and instructional materials which will help children read more efficiently.

In the developmental reading program for these ages, previously taught skills should be reinforced and applied. Location-of-information skills and paragraph comprehension should be mastered; interpretive and critical reading should be introduced as appropriate to the reading material. Reading interests should be broadened. Voluntary reading reaches a peak and is an important factor in developing reading fluency and vocabulary.

Children of these ages are energetic, curious, independent, willing to practice a skill important to them. The specialist, with his overview of the whole educational program, can suggest projects that appeal to a given group. One class of sixth grade bilingual children became interested in making vocabulary cards. The teacher bought them filing boxes in which to place 3x5 cards. On one side of a card the children wrote a new word they had learned in their school or outside reading, then divided it into syllables, accented it properly, and noted the part of speech. On the other side they wrote one or more definitions and a sentence using the word. They checked the accuracy of their cards with the dictionary. They used the cards as a game. Enthusiasm reached such a peak that some of the children brought shoe boxes to hold their expanding vocabulary cards. Other groups have shown similar interest in picture dictionaries, class or individual.

Children of this age also enjoy creative activities. One sixth grade class wrote a musical comedy on the early explorers which required a good deal of reference reading. A gifted fourth grader began to write a history of the world, which he continued to work on during the fifth and sixth grades. Almost any group project, in all its stages, requires reading and related language arts. The children themselves are the best source of ideas for projects in which they would engage enthusiastically. The specialist who visits classes and reads widely collects many suggestions that he can pass on to teachers.

In developing reading interests the librarian is the teacher's greatest ally. She will order new books for different purposes, supply teachers with books on a particular topic, guide children's reading in the library, and give instruction in how to locate information for a report or to solve a problem. In one school when the children were beginning to write research-type papers, the librarian conducted a unit on the use of the library. She not only explained the arrangement of books, the card catalogue, and

various indexes but also gave the classes a problem-solving teaching-type of test which required actual use of the library reference facilities.

The counselor may suggest books that have possible therapeutic value. For example, there are true to life stories of human relations, parent-child relations, good sportsmanship, courage, and fortitude in handling handicaps (see the Appendix). There are books that tell how to make and do things. One rural boy who could not read school books at his grade level managed to comprehend a government bulletin on how to raise a prize pig.

The reading consultant requests books high in interest but lower in reading difficulty for the retarded readers of different ages. More books of this type are being published continually.

As in the lower grades, the counselor sees reading as part of the child's total development and conveys this concept to teachers. Viewed in this way, reading achievement correlates with physical, psychological, and social factors, any of which may facilitate or interfere with a child's reading development. The counselor should acquaint teachers with physical handicaps that require special adjustments in the classroom; with limited and with exceptional mental ability; with home conditions and relationships that may be preventing a child's progress in listening, speaking, writing, and reading. This is a service that teachers appreciate because they often do not have time to get this information from the cumulative records for themselves.

As citizens, teachers and specialists may be able to improve or correct community conditions that are detrimental to children's development. One guidance worker set in motion the project of a family recreation center that would be used during certain periods of the school day as well as after school, evenings, and during vacations. Wholesome recreation may affect achievement in all the language arts. It improves children's happiness, provides enjoyable spontaneous practice in listening to selected radio and TV programs and in viewing wholesome motion pictures. It offers opportunities to speak with individuals and groups, to read stories to younger children, to take part in plays, to play word games, and to participate in quiz programs.

During the second half of the last year in elementary school, teachers and specialists should plan to make an inventory of the pupils' reading and related language abilities. Pupils should participate in this appraisal process. Its purpose is to note strengths, correct faults, and fill gaps in the total language arts competencies essential for success in further education.

• Guidance in the Junior High School

If the language arts abilities of pupils have developed as described during the elementary school years, the next stage should present chal-

lenge but not require reteaching. The challenge consists of applying abilities already acquired and perfecting higher level reading skills that have been introduced earlier.

The good study habits students have already formed should be reinforced and extended. Additional study habits, necessary in high school and college, may be established during preadolescent years. Gradually, students in these grades should no longer need close home supervision of their study time and place of study to bring about prompt completion of assignments. Young adolescents usually resent adult supervision; they want to be independent. Some need to learn that responsibility is a necessary accompaniment of independence. If they do not budget their time wisely, they must accept the consequences.

Unfortunately, the course of reading development does not run smoothly. Many students (the number varies in different junior high schools) have not achieved the reading competencies described in the preceding pages. They cannot comprehend the books that they are expected to read on their grade level. So far as their abilities allow, they must relearn or be taught the basic vocabulary, word-recognition, and comprehension skills in which they are deficient.

The retarded readers in these grades present many problems for teachers and administrators: How to find time to reteach skills the students should have acquired during the early elementary school? Who will teach these skills? What methods are effective at these ages?

These students will usually reject as babyish the methods used in teaching beginning reading. Phonics is less useful than it was earlier. Many words are not in their speaking vocabularies. Consequently, merely pronouncing the word does not give the meaning. Overuse of phonics may decrease reading efficiency by displacing more efficient methods of word recognition, such as syllabication and use of inflectional endings to signal structure which, in turn, conveys meaning. A knowledge of prefixes, suffixes, and roots is sometimes but not always useful because of the variable meanings of all but a few affixes (*6*).

Context clues are used increasingly as part of the continuous process of clarifying the meaning of one word by gaining new slants on it from words and sentences that precede and follow it. Clues of character, mood, and plot become more subtle and difficult to locate and interpret as pupils read more complex literature. Some pupils learn to do this only when they repeatedly go through in class the process of locating and interpreting clues in the literature they are reading.

Students should use the dictionary to define the limits within which a word may wander and as a check on the accuracy of their pronunciation and inferred meaning.

If students master these habits of word recognition during junior high school years, they will not be blocked by vocabulary difficulties in senior high school and college. If they take a little additional time to fix newly recognized words in memory, they will be building up a sight vocabulary essential to efficient reading.

During these years students also need to become more proficient in sentence and paragraph comprehension, outlining, and the making of summaries. Their practice material, for the most part, should be the books they are reading and the problems they are solving in the content fields. In social studies they have many opportunities for critical reading of texts, reference books, newspapers, and magazines. An analysis of the prevalent propaganda in advertisements and political speeches in newspapers and on TV is a good approach to the development of critical thinking and reading.

The specialist uses cumulative records and teachers' judgments to decide which pupils, if any, need psychological or clinical services; which might profit by remedial work in small groups; and which could be expected to improve in classes taught by teachers who are skillful in individualizing instruction.

Having placed children appropriately for reading instruction, the counselor would assist the teachers by supplying information about each child and planning teaching procedures with the teacher.

• Guidance in High School and College

Reading ability continues to develop during high school and college years, as earlier, through reinforcement and application of previously learned skills and through instruction in more advanced reading abilities. For example, one English teacher would often spend time exploring with his students the symbolism and semantic interpretation of words, phrases, and sentences in their literature assignments. This kind of reading development can be best taught in each subject by a teacher who understands the reading processes in his field.

The role of the counselor in the improvement of reading is more indirect. He does not presume to give subject teachers suggestions for teaching reading. Instead, he may be able to remove blocks to reading efficiency through helping students solve personality, social, and health problems; family relations problems; problems in the use of time and money. He may help with part-time jobs and with the choice of a vocation.

Chapter 3

THE RELATION OF GUIDANCE AND READING PROBLEMS

READING FAILURE is reflected in many guidance problems. Problems of educational and vocational guidance, premature school leaving, delinquency, and emotional disturbances often have a common denominator—failure or deficiency in reading.

• Educational and Vocational Guidance Problems

Students often attribute academic failure to ineffective study habits; lack of skill in analyzing, synthesizing, and remembering what they read; and inability to budget their time and make good use of it. There is some research evidence that when reading improvement programs are offered to all students who are interested in improving their reading skills, the participants show a general advance in academic achievement. For example, McDonald (*22*) reported that a group of college students who participated in a reading improvement program showed fewer dropouts and significant improvement in grades.

The largest percentage of underachievers is found among the gifted group. They are often reluctant readers; they can read but do not. Following are some of the reasons why these students are not reading as well as they could:

1. Some have become disillusioned about reading and about school.
2. They have had to "mark time" while waiting for slower students to catch up.
3. They have had to do "busy work" and drills that they did not need.
4. They are afraid of being different or of being called "fish," "squares," or "brains."

In the New York City study of gifted underachievers (Talent Preservation Project), instruction in reading was one of the methods used to raise the level of achievement.

One of the counselor's most common duties is holding interviews with students who are failing in one or more subjects, or who are afraid that they will fail. Inefficient reading methods are often at the bottom of this problem. As Morris Krugman (*20*) has written, "Reading failure . . . must, of necessity, depress functioning levels in all subject areas . . . and is . . . pervasive in its influence on total adjustment."

Helping students choose their high school courses and make further educational plans is often the most time-consuming of the counselor's duties. This, too, requires understanding of reading achievement.

Different vocations require different degrees of reading proficiency, an amount that increases with automation. Tommy, a drug addict, was desperately in need of a job. The youth worker offered to help him get a job. Tommy said, "Nobody, including you, can get me a job. Don't you know I can't read? Not one word!" When the worker said there were jobs which didn't require reading, Tommy replied, "There ain't no jobs where the boss don't say 'Hey, kid, write this down' or 'Here, read this'." Today's jobs require training. Many of the young people who most need jobs cannot get this training because they cannot read. Moreover, the admissions standards of vocational schools are rising.

At the other extreme, Joe, a ninth grade boy who was doing average work, wanted to be a doctor. Although he could not read above the sixth grade level, he had managed to "get by" in school by spending a good deal of time studying. As he moved into more difficult academic subjects, he began to feel the effect of his retardation in reading. It was difficult for him to admit that he might not be able to reach his vocational goal. The counselor helped him to accept his limited reading potential and to explore other vocations in the general field of medicine where academic requirements were not so demanding.

A variety of vocational books and pamphlets, both fictional and factual, should be made available to students who are concerned with making realistic vocational plans.

• Dropouts

A million boys and girls a year leave school before they graduate. Experts say, "The key is reading." "The greatest factor in school dropouts is reading retardation," declared Daniel Schreiber, Director of the National Education Association's school dropout project. "Study after study has shown that the average dropout is two years or more retarded in reading."

Ruth Penty (*29*) obtained conclusive evidence from the Battle Creek, Michigan, school system that the preponderance of early school leavers (49.9 percent) were among those in the lowest quarter of reading ability; only 14.5 percent of those in the highest quarter left before completing the senior year. More than three times as many poor readers as good readers dropped out; the peak occurred in tenth grade. Moreover,

> a very large percentage of the young people in both groups had potential for growth in reading ability. With proper help, these students could have shown marked improvement in reading ability which would have resulted in better scholastic achievement and personality adjustment.

Dropouts of average intelligence who were interviewed gave reasons such as the following:

> I didn't think that I was getting any place in school. I was working part time and wanted to work full time. I had trouble reading and understanding assignments. I couldn't remember what I read and didn't like to recite as I wasn't sure of myself.
>
> I didn't like school too well. I wanted to get married. I couldn't remember what I read. I didn't like to go to classes and be around other kids who seemed to learn easier than I did.
>
> I had trouble reading. I felt inferior.

Counselors and reading teachers can identify potential dropouts early in the school year and give them appropriate help. One counselor tells of a boy who came into her office and announced that he was going to leave school.

"Why, Jimmie!" the counselor said. "You don't have to leave school. Your folks can afford to keep you in school, I know."

After beating around the bush a bit, Jimmie came out with his real reasons for wanting to leave school. He was very poor in reading. When called on in class he did not know the answers. When asked to read aloud he was embarrassed. Altogether, he was so unhappy in school that he couldn't take it any longer.

There was no reading teacher in the school, but fortunately the counselor had taken courses in the teaching of reading. She spent the first part of one interview in observing the way Jimmie went about studying his assignments and ascertaining what some of his difficulties were. She then helped him work on these difficulties in connection with his assignments for the next day. She also recommended interesting books that he could read independently. With additional help from his teachers, to whom the counselor explained Jimmie's needs, he began to find school work more tolerable and remained to graduate.

• Delinquency and Discipline Problems

Whether you believe discipline should be one of the counselor's concerns depends on your definition of the word. Discipline in the sense of keeping order or "making the punishment fit the crime," is the major concern of many counselors and deans. If you think of discipline in its original meaning–treatment suitable for a disciple or learner–then you are likely to agree that it should be handled by a counselor, the person who is most likely to understand the individual and have the best relationship with him.

Both research and experience give us much evidence that delinquency is closely related to reading ability. In one experiment Gluck (*11*) reported that 53.5 percent of a delinquent group made a reading quotient of less than 80 points on the Stanford Achievement Test. Only 35.7 percent of the nondelinquent group scored below 80. At the New York Training School for Boys, 30 percent of the delinquent boys between the ages of 12 and 15 were reading below the second grade level. Statistics from the Nassau County Children's Court and other children's courts show that 65 to 70 percent of all cases were two or more years retarded in reading. Delinquents say they hate school because they are always left back and their reading is poor.

More than half the boys who come to the psychiatric ward at Bellevue Hospital have severe reading difficulties. According to Loretta Bender (*2*): "To fail to diagnose and give specific treatment to this group of boys will, I believe, result in a 50 percent failure in any correctional program, however good, for delinquent and emotionally disturbed boys."

A similar situation exists with respect to disadvantaged children and those from non-English-speaking homes.

• Emotional Problems and Reading Difficulties

Emotional problems with which the counselor is frequently concerned often stem from reading difficulties. Conversely, problems in learning to read may be due to emotional conflict. Usually there is a circular reaction: emotional disturbance prevents a child from concentrating on his reading; failure to learn to read intensifies the emotional conflict.

Failure has effects that have been well described by experts in the fields of mental health and guidance. Benjamin Spock wrote, "Remedial teachers have a great mental health contribution since a reading disability can shatter a child's adjustment as quickly as any other factor." Nevitt Sanford at an American Psychological Association symposium said that many of today's problems–delinquency, alcholic addiction, and mental illness–stem from lack of resources of the mind. Since these resources are built up

largely through reading, one of the most important things a teacher can do is teach children to love reading. Of all the varied educational handicaps, reading disability has the most pervasive influence on the student's school success and life adjustment. Morris Krugman (*20*) made this statement:

> A reading disability or severe retardation in reading has the same profound influence on educational growth as a severe emotional involvement. Both limit successful functioning, cause feelings of inadequacy and frustration, bring about disturbed relationships, influence outlook on life, and result in a variety of undesirable behavior manifestations.

In some instances of severe reading disability the emotional involvement is minimal. In others there may be only a temporary emotional interference. Yet in still other instances the causes of reading retardation in able learners are deep-seated, persistent, and pervasive.

An emotionally disturbed child may not be able to keep his mind sufficiently on the reading task to put forth the effort that it requires. When the individual is not accessible to reading instruction because of emotional disturbance, he should be treated by someone who is expert in psychotherapy. The referral itself may have therapeutic value insofar as it helps the individual to see his problem more clearly and recognize the kind of treatment that may, at the time, be most beneficial. After resolving some of the emotional conflicts that have been preventing him from concentrating and putting forth the necessary effort, he will be ready for instruction and practice in reading skills.*

Sometimes a reading case is dismissed as "an emotional problem" without due appreciation of the interaction among cognitive, emotional, and social factors. For example, the extreme anxiety and depression of a college girl in her freshman year was found to stem from her fear of being flunked. To her family, and especially to her father who was a prominent educator, scholastic achievement was extremely important. When she had been helped to improve her reading proficiency, she was able to continue through college successfully.

Some emotional problems stem from ineffective or premature instruction in reading. If the child fails to acquire a culturally important skill such as reading, the parents are disturbed. Their concern may affect both the child's relationship with them and his concept of himself.

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*The material in this chapter up this point has been adapted and reprinted by permission from an article by Ruth Strang, "The Relationship of Guidance to the Teaching of Reading." *Personnel and Guidance Journal,* April 1966, 832-835.

Increasingly psychiatrists and clinical psychologists are emphasizing the role of skillful teaching in the prevention of emotional problems. Many years ago Frederick Allen, Director of the Philadelphia Child Guidance Bureau, said that although a teacher was not a therapist, by working within the area of his competence he could have a therapeutic effect.

The teacher of reading, however, will not focus his attention on these emotional aspects; he will deal primarily with the individual's reading development and difficulty. He will diagnose the pupil's present reading status and difficulties, and provide instruction and practice to help him overcome obstacles and move ahead. By providing tasks in which the pupil can succeed, by focusing attention on his potential for growth, by helping parents take a more optimistic attitude toward the child, and by helping him build realistic expectations of progress the teacher will provide conditions in which optimum learning will take place.

A problem which seems based on incompetence in reading may actually be a guidance problem. One day when the teacher called on a fifth grade boy to read aloud he began reading, "And then Christopher Columbus . . . " but finished the sentence by saying, "ran round and round the barn." The other children laughed and the teacher told him to sit down. After class she said kindly, putting her hand on his shoulder, "Why do you do things like that, Jimmy?" He pushed her hand away and said angrily, "Everyone is always picking on me."

The teacher sought the help of the school social worker who asked for more details about Jimmy's behavior in class. "What is your explanation?" she asked. "Perhaps he's misunderstood at home," the teacher said, "and perhaps in school he's ashamed to have the other children know he can't read well. So he says silly things when he comes to words he cannot understand."

When the social worker visited the home she found the parents favored the older brother Ted. When something was needed at the store Ted would speak up, "I'll go, Pop; I know just what you want." When the family was making plans for recreation, Jimmy was not expected to have any ideas. Being greatly concerned about his lack of progress in school, especially in reading, his parents were constantly critical of him. As they talked with the social worker she was able to offer them a few suggestions: "When his parents are constantly critical of him, a child sometimes feels they do not love him, or do not love him as much as they do their other children." "Even children in the same family may be very different–we cannot compare one child with another." And "A child's unhappiness at home often makes it impossible for him to pay attention in school."

From her investigation the social worker was convinced that Jimmy was not a bad boy, just a misunderstood one. With the teacher she planned

ways to help him gain peer approval by making contributions to the class rather than by resorting to clowning. She also referred him to the reading teacher for special instruction. When he showed progress, his parents became less critical. At the end of the year Jimmy said, "I guess I'm not such a headache to everybody any more, or to myself either."

This case illustrates the common sequence: inability to comprehend the reading assignments in one's grade, failure in subjects requiring a good deal of reading, dissatisfaction with school, and either truancy or behavior problems in class. Unfortunately, too often the student is not referred to a counselor until the last stage is reached, by which time the problem, being more complex, takes longer to diagnose and correct.

The following is an example of a guidance problem that in reality was a reading problem. A high school boy came into the counselor's office and announced that he was leaving school. The counselor, knowing the boy's background and that his family was financially able to keep him in school, said, "Why, Don, you don't have to leave school to go to work. Your family would be glad to have you stay to graduate." Finally Don admitted that his real reason for wanting to leave school was his difficulty with reading. "The kids laugh when the teacher makes me read out loud, and the books I have to read don't make sense to me," he told her.

Fortunately this counselor had taken some work in reading and had a good relationship with Don. First, she tried to find out more definitely what his reading potentialities were. On the Bellevue-Wechsler individual intelligence test he obtained an IQ of 115 on the quantitative tests and 90 on the verbal part. These results suggested potential mental ability. The auditory comprehension test of the Diagnostic Reading Committee battery showed much higher ability to comprehend what he heard than to comprehend a similar selection which he read silently. This, too, pointed to potentiality for improvement.

The second step was to learn more about his reading abilities at present and the difficulties he was encountering. To obtain a general idea of his reading level, the counselor looked through Don's cumulative record for results of a recent reading test. She found an Iowa Silent Reading Test given the previous year; his score corresponded to a fifth grade level.

Although some diagnostic information could be obtained from the standardized test, the counselor wanted more specific information about his reading difficulties. To obtain this, she asked Don to read some fifth grade selections; standardized tests do not always indicate the level on which the student is actually reading books and articles of various kinds. He stumbled over third grade material that embarrassed him by being childish in content. He read well more difficult material in which he was keenly interested.

The third step combined diagnosis and instruction; its purpose was to alleviate his immediate distress in trying to study. The counselor sat beside him as he began to read his day's assignment in history. Thus she not only learned about his approach to reading, but also taught him a better method—to recall what he knew about the subject and raise questions before beginning to read. She discovered his difficulties in word recognition and meaning and in comprehension, so was able to give immediate instruction for improvement in these reading skills.

The counselor's fourth step was to give further practice and instruction specifically indicated by her informal diagnostic procedure. While thus helping him meet his immediate problems, she also encouraged wide reading of interesting materials on his present reading level. This served to increase his fluency and change his attitude toward reading and toward himself as a boy who could not read.

Helping Don took a considerable amount of the counselor's time, especially at the beginning. Later she gave Don's teachers methods of helping other students improve their reading in their respective subjects. Was this use of the counselor's time justified in a school having no reading specialist? It most certainly was. Not only did she aid an individual pupil to develop his learning potentialities and prepare himself better for life; she also helped other teachers to deal more adequately with one of the most serious problems in high school today—failure in academic subjects resulting from ineffective reading and study habits.

Both the reading teacher and the counselor may employ a nontechnical kind of bibliotherapy in dealing with emotional difficulties. From some introspective reports it seems that certain books do make a strong impression on adolescents. One boy said, "The Bible stabilized my thoughts." Another boy described how his attitude toward war changed after he read Ernie Pyles' *Brave Men.* A girl said, "Until I had read *The Old Maid,* I never knew how a child could hurt her mother."

The counselor may recommend to a student books or stories that will give him an insight into his particular problems. For example, *The Torn Invitation* by Katov portrays a high school boy who was ashamed to have his mother come to a school affair. After reading this story one boy wrote:

> I think there are times once in a while when most kids feel ashamed of their parents. I also think they feel guilty about it. I have. Kids aren't so heartless as they sometimes may appear. They sooner or later realize, understand, and appreciate what's being done for them.

Kaplan (*18*) summarized the mental health value of books in this way:

> Books and stories can make a vital contribution to the mental health of children. They provide a medium through which boys and girls may

be encouraged to discuss their personal problems; they make available a means through which youngsters can escape temporarily from their tensions and frustrations; and they furnish vicarious experiences which enable children to gain deeper insight into their own behavior by experiencing the life problems of others.

Mental health problems are especially likely to arise in schools and colleges having high academic standards and stressing competitive examinations. In some cases the student is attempting the impossible, and adjustment of his program should be made. In other cases, able students have "got by" on lower educational levels without putting forth their best effort. Worse yet, they have formed indolent, inefficient study habits and attitudes that are hard to break. When they enter college they are not able to meet the academic demands. This is a new and often frightening experience. However, with help in correcting reading and study habits, they are often able to make a good adjustment to college.

It is not only these special cases that need to improve their reading. It is much better, whenever possible, to prevent failure and its attendant nervous wear and tear. To this end, instruction in reading should be an intrinsic part of the program of all college freshmen. Practically every student can increase his reading efficiency.

Chapter 4

GUIDANCE IN THE READING DEVELOPMENT OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

IN ADDITION to the developmental and remedial guidance suggested in the previous sections, the counselor has the responsibility of making provision for special groups: mentally retarded children, able learners, severe reading disability cases, emotionally disturbed individuals, and the physically handicapped. Some of the reading problems of each of these groups will be described briefly.

• The Mentally Retarded

The counselor should be very cautious about labeling a pupil as mentally retarded. Many factors, physical and social as well as psychological, may depress the individual's IQ and prevent him from demonstrating his true mental ability. Although low in many abilities tested, those labeled "mentally retarded" are usually average or higher in some.

In working with mentally retarded children, readiness for learning to read should be most carefully determined. Initial failure may seriously discourage the child's further efforts to learn.

If the child lacks the psycholinguistic and mental prerequisites for success in beginning reading, he should be referred to a specialist for appropriate remedial measures. The Peabody Language Development Kits (*28*) are useful for these children. By building up deficits in eye-hand coordination, visual and auditory perception, discrimination, memory, and sequencing, the child will have important prerequisites for learning to read. For example, Samuel Kirk (*19*) found certain children with high scores on visual sequencing who were good readers despite their low IQ's. Some degree of mental retardation itself may be due to failure to develop reading and related language arts abilities.

Reading instruction for slow-learning children should proceed sequentially step by step. Too often they are given tasks for which they have not acquired the basic concepts and skills. They need a carefully graded set of reading material with much interesting repetition at each level before proceeding to the next.

They need the reinforcement of success and approval. Because it is a greater effort for them to learn, they need correspondingly greater motivation. Primary reinforcers such as food are effective in the initial stages before the successful performance itself becomes reinforcing.

• Able Learners

The counselors in the Long Beach, California, school system periodically went over the cumulative records to identify intellectually superior and talented children. Then they interviewed each one, with his parents if possible, to obtain additional information about educational and vocational plans, interests and hobbies, purposes and goals.

Without using the words *gifted* or *superior,* they tried to help these students get a sense of direction and of responsibility for using the lucky combination of heredity and environment that had made them gifted in some respect. After each interview the counselor made a few notes for the student's teachers suggesting class and extra class experiences that would enrich his program (*36*).

Guidance in the reading development of gifted children consists largely of providing an intellectually stimulating environment and leaving them free to use it in their own best ways. After being confronted with the full complexity of reading materials in the books they look at and those that are read to them, many gifted children discover sound-symbol associations independently. However, to avoid their slipping into inefficient habits, some instruction should be offered them at each stage of their reading development. Their reading interests follow the general pattern of average children, but become prominent one or two years earlier than the average. Their reading comprehension is usually still more accelerated.

Because of dull books and boredom from instruction and drill that they do not need, many gifted children do not develop their reading potentialities. It is the responsibility of the guidance and reading specialists to identify these underachievers and provide a more stimulating environment for them. Other able retarded readers may fail to attain their potential reading ability for a number of reasons, which may be ascertained by diagnostic procedures.

• Severe Reading Disability Cases

There are a few severe cases of reading disability that baffle both the counselor and the reading specialist. These children have extreme difficulty with reading, speech, hand-eye coordination, and body orientation. They are often hyperactive. Many other symptoms also seem to be associ-

ated with severe reading disability (*26*). In these cases the reading problem often is complicated by emotional disturbance caused by having been subjected to tasks that they are not able to accomplish.

The counselor and reading specialist should not attempt to diagnose and label these cases; a combination of neurological and special psychological examinations is necessary to pinpoint the causal factors. There are, however, certain methods of treatment that have been effective:

1. Avoid distractions during the reading session in the room and associated with the teacher, such as glittering or dangling jewelry.
2. Cover the page as a whole with a sheet of thin cardboard having a slit in it that exposes one phrase or sentence at a time.
3. Utilize motivation and appropriate reinforcers to facilitate learning.
4. Be generous and specific in approval of the child's progress. Extrinsic rewards such as candy are initially useful; motivation that especially appeals to the child is most effective. One child who had learned several words one day could not seem to remember them the next day until the teacher said, "Let's play that you are the teacher." When the teacher made mistakes in pronunciation the child gleefully pointed them out, "That's wrong; the word's . . . !"
5. Introduce the Fernald kinesthetic or tracing method and use it if the individual responds favorably to it (*10*).

Sometimes it takes many months to overcome the effects of early frustration from failure to learn to read.

Emotionally disturbed children. The reciprocal relation between reading and emotional difficulties has been discussed in the previous chapters. These children especially need consistent treatment. The behavioral approach is being used more frequently than prolonged therapy. In his Re-Ed Centers, Hobbs (*15*) emphasizes the importance of acquiring academic skills in regular classrooms rather than in special therapy rooms.

• The Physically Handicapped

Reading disabilities usually accompany physical handicaps. The visually handicapped obviously lack the most important avenue of learning to read. Blind children must be taught through another sensory avenue. Many have learned Braille. Others have gained some of the values of reading through listening to records, now speeded up to reduce greatly the total listening time.

Children with hearing loss are prevented from learning by the usual method of associating the unfamiliar letter symbol with the sounds of language they have already learned. It is possible, but laborious, for them

to learn by the visual avenue by associating each new word with a picture or action and eventually using these words in sentences, directions, and simple stories. The teacher must constantly check on the correctness of their comprehension. The other method is to help them acquire speech first, and then proceed as in normal reading instruction.

Although special methods and instructional materials are required for the severely handicapped, counselors and reading specialists should also be on the alert to the problems of children who have greater proficiency in one mode than another. Two courses of action are open for these children: 1) the provision of instruction and materials that use the child's preferred avenue, i.e., "look-say" with the child with a hearing handicap, a phonetic method with the child with poor vision; and 2) building up the avenue in which there is deficiency. A combination of these two approaches would be most effective.

Physically handicapped children vary greatly in their reading ability. Some spastics are highly intelligent and make a good academic adjustment despite their physical handicaps.

The counselor and reading specialist can do much to help handicapped children develop positive attitudes toward themselves and to encourage others to accept them as normal except for their special disability. In fact, we might ask, "Who is a handicapped person?" Is an individual who adjusts to his disability and develops sound values and personal relationships really hampered as much as a physically competent person whose distorted values and negative or aggressive attitudes prevent his using his abilities fully and positively?

Chapter 5

THE TEAM APPROACH

THE PRECEDING sections have emphasized that counselors and reading teachers or specialists are partners in the improvement of reading. Ideally, both groups of professional workers establish interpersonal relationships characterized by sincerity, empathy, and positive regard for the individual. Yet each has his own competencies which serve to strengthen the partnership.

• Contribution of the Counselor

The following are contributions that the counselor can make to the reading improvement program:

1. By acquiring understanding of the developmental reading program and the causes of students' reading difficulties he can help teachers prevent reading problems.
2. He can interest and assist subject teachers in improving student reading as an intrinsic part of their teaching.
3. If no reading specialist is available, the counselor who has had training in reading can include the development of reading and study skills as part of his group guidance classes. One counselor conducted a series of interesting discussions on how students learn.
4. He can assist in identifying students who need special instruction in reading.
5. He can work with individual cases in which educational, psychological, social, and vocational problems are associated with reading difficulties.
6. As he works with exceptional children he can become aware of the relation of reading difficulties to their particular problems.
7. He may cooperate with the librarian in acquiring books that are useful in both guidance and reading improvement.
8. When confronted with guidance problems that turn into reading problems, he may refer them to the reading specialist or to a reading or psychoeducational clinic.

9. By understanding the influence of home and community on student achievement, he can in some instances modify parents' attitudes, secure better conditions for the development of preschool children, and set in motion plans for recreational and educational facilities in the community.

10. By serving on administrative and policy-making committees the counselor can present the need for a reading teacher-consultant in every school; a developmental program for all students if the large majority are reading below their potential ability; special help for retarded readers who are not responding to the reading instruction given in regular classes; and books, magazines, and visual aids appropriate to the wide range of interests and reading abilities represented in the school.

• Contribution of the Reading Specialist

The reading teacher or the reading consultant can contribute to the guidance program in the following ways:

1. He can help forestall guidance problems by preventing academic failure through improved teaching of reading throughout the school.

2. He can teach a developmental reading course for all students at a strategic grade level.

3. He can meet the needs of severely retarded readers by means of special groups and work with individuals.

4. The reading teacher can establish a reciprocal relationship with guidance workers in the diagnosis and treatment of reading problems.

5. He can serve on administrative and policy-making committees to present the need for more effective teaching of reading in every class.

6. He can help create community conditions that are favorable to reading development.

7. He can participate in the team approach in reading-guidance problems. Ideally the team would be comprised of teachers, the counselor, reading consultant, psychologist, social worker, and other specialists available in the school system.

• Preparation Needed

It would of course be most advantageous if every school system could employ a reading specialist as well as counselors. But since this is not financially feasible for systems with small enrollments, it would be desirable that the counselors have training in both fields. To perform this dual role, the counselor needs proficiency in dealing with reading problems that he may uncover in the course of his interviews with students. Having obtained rapport with an individual, there are advantages in continuing the

relationship instead of referring him to another person. Even when the counselor is engaged primarily in individual or group therapy, he should recognize the need for reading instruction to supplement the therapeutic process. To this end he should have preparation in reading theory and teaching practice.

Similarly, the reading teacher, reading specialist, or classroom teacher needs preparation in guidance since the teaching of reading is essentially guidance in learning. He needs to know techniques of studying the individual, recognizing differences among students in achievement motivation, and dealing with minor emotional and personality factors that may be interfering with progress in reading.

By recognizing their reciprocal relationships, specialists in these two fields will contribute to the improvement of reading and the personal development of all the pupils whom they serve.

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